

Nasukogen Visitor Center

The Nasukogen Visitor Center is located within Nikko National Park in the Nasu-Kashi area, which straddles Tochigi and Fukushima Prefectures. The Center provides information on activities in the Nasu-Kashi area, offers exhibits that introduce the area's history and natural environment, and features monthly displays of craftwork, photography, and news from local enthusiasts.

A touchscreen panel gives information on outdoor activities and lodgings in English, Korean, and Chinese. Staff can suggest hiking routes and explain the weather and mountain conditions.

When the weather is not suitable for hiking, Visitor Center guests can take one of several “virtual walks” that employ a touch-sensitive floor pad and video screen to display the routes in first-person view. Children can explore a hands-on exhibit that includes games, specimens of plants and insects, the sounds of the seasons, gloves in the shape of animal hands, and an artificial re-creation of the forest floor. Other video terminals (some with English subtitles) explain the volcanic history of the Nasu mountains, seasonal scenery, wildlife, and local legends.

The Visitor Center is an eco-friendly building constructed with locally sourced timber and andesite (volcanic rock). The facility uses long-lasting LEDs and derives part of its electrical power from solar panels. The heating in the lounge area is provided by a stove that burns pellets made of compressed wood waste—an efficient use of industrial byproducts—rather than fossil fuels.

The gazebo and lawn area surrounding the center are ideal for picnics and afford a splendid view of Mt. Chausu and the rest of the Nasu mountain range.